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## LANDSCAPE SCALE CONSERVATION NEWS

### Model Landscape Scale Project – Adapting Forests to a Changing Climate

Climate change affects the communities we live in and the landscape around us in many ways; often these effects are not fully understood. However, as climate change knowledge grows, one point becomes increasingly clear: approaches to dealing with climate change will need to be at a broad landscape scale.

Many land managers, from federal to private, are interested in managing their lands to adapt to climate changes. An initial challenge is to understand how climate change will affect our landscapes and our forests. The Forest Service and several partners have conducted an [Ecosystem Vulnerability Assessment and Synthesis](#) for northern Wisconsin forests, which provides landowners with information regarding anticipated climate change impacts in the local area.

Another challenge is to envision how adaptation strategies on one particular piece of land can fit into a larger network of ownerships and efforts in that area. To help provide an example of climate change adaptation across multiple ownerships, the [Northern Institute of Applied Climate Science](#) and several partners have initiated a series of adaptation demonstration projects throughout northern Wisconsin. These demonstrations encompass a variety of forest types and forest management goals in order to show a range of options for creating climate-adapted forests that also provide desired environmental benefits. Case studies will present opportunities for shared learning within the forestry community.

This series of adaptation demonstrations are being coordinated through the [Northwoods Climate Change Response Framework](#) and the [Shared Landscapes Initiative](#) (SLI), a cross-ownership forum on climate change in northern Wisconsin's forests. Several forest landowners are considering how climate change may affect areas in which they work using the [Forest Adaptation Resources](#) to go through a process to assess potential climate change impacts, identify challenges and opportunities for meeting management goals, and select actions that enhance the ability of forest to adapt to anticipated changes.

Current partners in the SLI demonstration include The Nature Conservancy, Wisconsin DNR, the Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, and the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest. While each landowner may ultimately select different management approaches and tactics for their forests, the network across the landscape will be connected through dialogue and a shared process. The hope is that this work will put the forest community in a better position to help sustain the Northwoods long into the future.



*Caroline Lake Preserve, a 1044-acre area owned and managed by The Nature Conservancy in northern Wisconsin. Managers are currently updating the management vision for this property to account for a range of possible climate futures*



*Red oak seedlings at the Caroline Lake property. Red oak is expected to do well in northern Wisconsin under a range of potential climate futures.*

## UPDATES ON OTHER LANDSCAPE SCALE CONSERVATION INITIATIVES

- On July 6, 2012, the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 was [reauthorized](#) for one year. Projects are recommended for funding through Resource Advisory Committees. Funds may be used for making additional investments in, and creating additional employment opportunities through projects that improve existing infrastructure, enhance forest ecosystems, and restore and improve land health and water quality. The Chequamegon Nicolet National Forest released a [request for proposals](#), accepting proposals through August 20, 2012.
- On July 24th, 2012, USDA's [Office of the Chief Scientist](#) released peer-reviewed science papers that elaborate on USDA's Action Plan for science. One of these key areas is a [white paper](#) on climate change. The paper elaborates upon USDA's scientific policy on climate change and highlights four main strategies that USDA will take to prepare for climate change.
- The Forest Service's Northeastern Area of State and Private Forestry is developing a strategic plan to guide its work for the next five years. They drafted strategic issues and received input on them from the public through a comment period that ended August 3, 2012; [learn more](#).
- The [National Association of State Foresters](#) (NASF) will receive a \$40,000 grant from the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI®), awarded under their Conservation and Community Partnerships Grant Program. The grant will promote continuous improvement in water quality protection and assess how well forestry best management practices are protecting water resources in the United States. Support is provided by the U.S Forest Service. The work will update NASF's assessment of how states and territories are developing and implementing best management practices to safeguard lakes, rivers and watersheds.
- The Forest Service's Southern Research Station (SRS) recently published a national study, [Outdoor Recreation Trends and Futures](#), which shows that Americans' current choices for outdoor recreation differ noticeably from those made by previous generations. Participation in "traditional" activities such as hunting and fishing has flattened or declined, while participation in activities that involve viewing and photographing nature is growing. The importance of outdoor recreation to our national economy is highlighted in a [series of reports](#) by the Outdoor Industry Association.

## LANDSCAPE SCALE CONSERVATION PROJECTS — HONORABLE MENTIONS



*Eastern subspecies wild turkey*

### Agreement to Improve Wildlife Habitat at Three National Forests

The three National Forests in Michigan (the Huron-Manistee, Hiawatha, and Ottawa) are excited to announce the signing of an agreement with the National Wild Turkey Federation aimed at increasing coordination in achieving wildlife habitat restoration and enhancement. "The USDA Forest Service is a valued NWTf partner," stated Brandon Houck, NWTf director of conservation operations, western region. "We're expecting great things to happen as a result of this partnership." [Learn more](#).



*Indiana bat*

### White-nosed Syndrome Requires Many Hands to Address This Threat to Bats

Many bat populations in the Eastern U.S. are being devastated by a disease called White-nose Syndrome (WNS). Agencies and organizations are responding by learning more about this disease and taking steps to protect bats from it. The Eastern Region is home to 14 bat species, including several that are federally endangered. [Recent activities](#) of the Forest Service's Eastern Region are included on the [WNS web site](#). Actions to slow the spread of WNS requires many agencies, partners and individuals to take action. Some of the immediate actions taken include closing public access to hibernacula (caves, abandoned mines) and assessing pre-WNS maternity season bat populations across the eastern states.

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**Landscape Scale Conservation** - is a framework to conceive, plan, finance, and manage projects with significant conservation value—ecological, economical, and social. The broad concept of Landscape Scale Conservation includes three main components: Contributes to landscape scale goals or outcomes; connects separate but related actions and integrates internal program; and involves strong partnerships, a shared vision, and cross-boundary engagement with local communities and other landowners.